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Security Council

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Monday, 6 April 2009, 4 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Heller	(Mexico)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Ebner
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
	China	Mr. Huang Hongjiang
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Skračić
	France	Mr. Guidée
	Japan	Mr. Kumagai
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Williams
	United States of America	Ms. Germain
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2009/129)

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09-29318 (E)

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The meeting resumed at 4.10 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Jamaica, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to remind all speakers, as I indicated at the morning session, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti, would like to congratulate you, Sir, and the delegation of Mexico for having taken the initiative to organize this debate on Haiti and in this way to address the latest report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2009/129) and the Security Council's recent visit to Haiti in March 2009, led by Costa Rica.

Before noting the two main topics to be addressed by the Council, I would like to reaffirm once again the Group of Friends of Haiti's full commitment to and support for the Haitian Government and people in rebuilding their country, consolidating peace and stability, and promoting recovery and sustainable development.

As the coordinator of the Group of Friends of Haiti, I would like to express our strong support for MINUSTAH — and for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in their efforts to improve the stability and governance in Haiti. The latest report of the Secretary-General, dated 6 March 2009, underlines the progress made in implementing the mandate of MINUSTAH, as set out in resolution 1840 (2008) and previous resolutions.

The Group of Friends of Haiti welcomes the progress achieved in four of the five areas considered critical for consolidating Haiti's stability: political dialogue and elections; extension of State authority, including border management; strengthening of security; and the rule of law and human rights. Similarly, we recognize the strong commitment of a group of Latin American countries that are pooling their resources to help train the Haitian National Police. We also underscore the efforts made by the Meeting of Deputy Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Deputy Ministers for Defence of the Consultative Group 2 x 9 on Haiti.

As regards political dialogue and the elections, our Group believes that establishing the Government of Prime Minister Pierre-Louis represents an important step forward and the expression of improved cooperation among the executive branch, Parliament and civil society in response to the devastating series of tropical storms that struck the country. It is important to consolidate that cooperation in order to meet the country's needs.

The Group of Friends of Haiti stresses the need for free and fair elections and calls on all political actors to ensure that the upcoming elections for the renewal of one third of the Senate are held in a peaceful atmosphere.

Haiti continues to grapple with food insecurity, significant poverty and a fragile humanitarian situation. In those areas, unfortunately, there has been a marked deterioration in the daily living conditions of the vast majority of the Haitian people. The Group of Friends of Haiti shares the view of the Secretary-General that stabilization, security and development are linked, since the current levels of poverty, deprivation and suffering in the country are clearly incompatible with long-term stability. Therefore, it is urgent that the Haitian authorities collaborate closely with the international community to facilitate the distribution of humanitarian aid and recovery work and to lay a foundation for renewed private-sector activity in the interests of the country's long-term reconstruction and development.

The Group of Friends of Haiti reaffirms the great importance of the donor conference on 14 April. It will be an opportunity for donors and partners to improve coordination and to make available the additional assistance required by the Government of Haiti to meet the country's immediate needs and to lay the foundations for sustainable economic and social development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for giving me the floor as a representative of a Member State, especially given that some representatives of the United Nations agencies wanted to take the floor before us. I would like to thank you in particular for convening this meeting on the situation in Haiti, the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2009/129) and the recent visit by a Security Council delegation headed by Ambassador Urbina of Costa Rica.

While endorsing the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Uruguay on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti, at the outset I would also like to reiterate Chile's commitment to the stabilization process in Haiti. Since the beginning of the Haitian crisis in February 2004, my country has joined the efforts of the international community to avert a civil war and to contribute to the reconstruction process of that Caribbean nation. To that end, we participated in the Multinational Interim Force in Haiti in the first phase and, since then, we have maintained an active presence in MINUSTAH throughout its five years of existence.

We welcome the resolute measures taken by President René Préval to consolidate democracy in his country and to strengthen the rule of law and respect for human rights. We believe that full stabilization should go hand in hand with an inclusive democratic process in which everyone feels engaged in the reconstruction and eventual prosperity of their nation. In that regard, we value the upcoming elections of 19 April and hope that they take place in the most normal possible conditions.

While recognizing the improved security conditions in Haiti, such as the decrease in the number of kidnappings, we are also encouraged to note the progress made on four of the five benchmarks established by the Secretary-General: political dialogue and elections; extension of State authority, including border management; strengthening of security; and the rule of law and human rights. Likewise, enhanced patrolling of maritime and land borders should continue with increased international assistance in order to mitigate the potential destabilizing effect of drug trafficking.

In particular, we would like to express our profound concern over the stagnation of Haiti's socio-economic development and food security. The inextricable linkage between security and development is fundamental to understanding the current situation in Haiti. Therefore, we believe that appropriate coordination between all stakeholders involved in building peace in Haiti, as established in resolution 1840 (2008), must include efforts to improve the socio-economic indicators for Haitians. Without that, the achievements of the past five years in Haiti could rapidly disappear.

The next donor conference for Haiti, to take place in Washington, D.C., on 14 April, is a positive sign. Chile, given its position as a country with a bilateral cooperation policy with Haiti in such areas as education and the promotion of kindergartens, will participate and contribute, within its capacity, to the success of that conference so as to ensure the due implementation of development programmes for the Caribbean nation under the key principle of national ownership. Concurrently, it is urgent to further foster private investment, which helps to create employment and an environment favourable to foreign and national investment.

Allow me to underscore not only the historic commitment of my country but also the efforts of a large number of Latin American countries. Those countries account for nearly 60 per cent of the Blue Helmets in MINUSTAH and, under such initiatives as the "2 x 9 Mechanism" and the recently established Working Group for the Latin American coordination and cooperation with the Haitian National Police, are seeking to formulate coherent and sustainable strategies to optimize the contributions of our troops and police, both within MINUSTAH and in training and cooperation programmes with the Haitian National Police. To cite just one statistic, this year our country will train more than 70 Haitian National Police officers in Chile at the Carabineros Police Sciences Academy. The programme will continue for the next few years.

I conclude with an appeal that we not forget Haiti. The recent hurricanes and their devastating consequences for the population, together with the food and economic crises, make it more urgent to continue to work towards the goal that brings us together today: achieving a lasting peace in Haiti with full respect for and the promotion of human rights, strengthening of the rule of law and democracy and real progress in terms of development and dignity for its population.

Finally, my country remains committed to Haiti and, alongside the United Nations, will persevere in the pursuit of all these humanitarian objectives in that brotherly Caribbean country.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Canada.

Mr. McNee (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, and the entire Mexican delegation for having organized this important meeting. I should also like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing today and for the work that he has done in Haiti since he assumed his duties in 2007.

Canada attaches great importance to the Haitian dossier. Haiti is the second-largest recipient of Canadian development aid, after Afghanistan. Our total commitment has risen to $555 million for the period 2006-2011. Furthermore, Canada believes that the inter-American nature of the efforts in Haiti is a fundamental aspect of international action in that country. That regional solidarity also makes partnerships with the Organization of American States and the Caribbean Community imperative. In addition, Canada promotes an approach that includes the whole island of Hispaniola and recognizes the importance of the Dominican Republic to the Haitian dossier.

This is the first open debate of the Security Council on Haiti since March 2006. Much progress has been made over the past three years. We can be proud of what has been accomplished by the Haitians and by the international community. We wish to thank the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for its work to stabilize Haiti and for its role in the re-establishment of security. We also commend the United Nations country team, led by Mr. Joël Boutroue, for its work in the development and coordination of humanitarian aid. I should also like to highlight the exceptional work done by UNICEF and the World Food Programme in response to the damage caused by the four hurricanes that hit Haiti in August and September 2008. Their intervention, including in partnership with the Canadian frigate *St. John's*, made it possible to save many human lives.

Last summer's hurricanes were a reminder that all the progress made in Haiti remains fragile. Consolidating security requires concerted action in the area of development. On the other hand, truly useful action in the area of development requires unwavering political support. To that end, all United Nations actors in Haiti must support one another. In particular, the Special Representative must provide the added value of his political role to the country team's activities.

(*spoke in English*)

In a context such as that in Haiti, where everything must be done immediately, certain priorities must be set. Progress has been made in Haiti over the past few years because there was a political consensus among Haitian authorities. Given the multiple challenges that the country is facing, it is essential to maintain that consensus among Haiti's decision-makers in order to work for the common good of the Haitian population. The Special Representative's role is crucial in that regard. We know that the great majority of Haitians want reform in order to develop their country. Only those who profit from instability and insecurity have an interest in maintaining the status quo. But maintaining the status quo would only set the stage for another crisis. Eight United Nations interventions over the past two decades should be sufficient proof of that.

We think that MINUSTAH must remain in Haiti for as long as it takes to guarantee the security and stability of Haitian institutions. It must continue to be given appropriate resources and an appropriate mandate. MINUSTAH's work must clearly be paired with progress in reforming the Haitian National Police and with reforms made to the judicial and correctional systems.

Canada would also like to point out the usefulness of the indicators of progress presented by the Secretary-General last summer, when the future of MINUSTAH was being considered. We believe that those indicators must be developed further to allow the Haitian Government and the international community properly to measure the impact of their joint stabilization and reconstruction efforts.

Resolution 1840 (2008) contains all the elements needed for appropriate follow-up through the next renewals of the Mission's mandate. Haitian leadership and ownership of reforms are crucial ingredients, but this must not delay required reform. Inertia cannot be a response to the complex problems facing Haiti.

The donor conference to be held in Washington, D.C., in a few days' time is an important step for Haiti and its international partners. It will be a good opportunity to strengthen the coordination of partnerships with the road map that is the national growth and poverty reduction strategy paper. Moreover, we thank the Secretary-General for commissioning Professor Paul Collier's report, which highlighted objective factors specific to Haiti and provided a boost and needed optimism for the country's economic prospects and for the generation of new jobs.

This July, in the light of the results of the Washington, D.C., meeting, the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, which Canada has the privilege of chairing, will make recommendations regarding long-term development strategies for Haiti. The Senate elections, also being held in a few days, should help to stabilize Government institutions there.

In conclusion, Canada will continue to cooperate with Haiti by fully respecting its Constitution, its culture, its history and its diversity. We stress the need to work with a united Haitian people and with national authorities who are politically inclusive and convinced of the need to move forward together democratically towards true political, economic and social development. The damage inflicted by hurricanes last year was indeed a setback, but the progress that has been achieved in other areas gives hope for the future. The international community has no alternative but to remain committed to helping Haiti to move ahead to a better future. That is why, despite the extent of the challenges, Canada remains determined to continue to contribute to Haiti's development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Brazil.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am pleased to see Mexico and you, Sir, in the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. Your extensive experience and well-known skill guarantee the productive and effective management of the work of this organ.

I also wish to express my appreciation to Ambassador Jorge Urbina, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica, for having led the Council mission to Haiti. His report in that connection contains important items of information.

(*spoke in English*)

I also wish to express my delegation's appreciation for the work that is being done in Haiti by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hédi Annabi, as well as for Mr. Annabi's briefing this morning.

Brazil concurs with the key assessment of the Secretary-General in his latest report on Haiti (S/2009/129), that despite progress in areas such as political dialogue and elections, extension of State authority, the strengthening of security, rule of law and human rights, there has been a marked deterioration in the living conditions of the population. In addition, achievements in the area of security are still fragile.

That assessment corroborates Brazil's view that it is necessary to maintain the present configuration and mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), while emphasizing the need for the international community to support domestic efforts to improve the socio-economic situation in the country. Haitians have primary responsibility for and full ownership of their country's development. However, they continue to need our unwavering solidarity and support.

As is widely known, MINUSTAH and the Haitian authorities have cooperated to dramatically improve security in the country. Areas of Port-au-Prince and other cities that were dominated by gangs are now under the authority of the State, and their inhabitants can live without fear of violence. However, the relative fragility of such gains demonstrates that more work is needed to make them fully sustainable. A key component of the strategy to achieve that goal is the reform and strengthening of the Haitian National Police (PNH) as well as of the judiciary and the correctional system. Brazil and several other countries are assisting or preparing to assist the Haitian Government in these crucial tasks. There is optimism that the PNH will reach the quantitative and qualitative goals that have been established, but for this to happen

staying the course is essential. These endeavours are part of a larger effort to continue investing in capacity-building so as to endow the country with the institutional tools it needs to consolidate stability. All bilateral and multilateral assistance in this regard should be enhanced at this crucial juncture.

In recent months, the Secretary-General has redoubled his efforts to attract international attention and investment to Haiti. His recent visit, alongside former President Clinton, testifies to the fact that the Secretary-General fully shares the view that security measures alone cannot solve the root causes of Haiti's problems. As a country that has long maintained that long-term stability in Haiti needs a combination of security, national reconciliation and development, Brazil can only applaud such initiatives.

The sad statistics about poverty in the country are well known. Reversing them requires that the Haitian Government and its numerous partners jointly intensify efforts to overcome the challenges faced by Haitians in their daily lives. The donor conference to be held in Washington on 14 April is a unique opportunity for furthering coordination among stakeholders and for raising additional resources. The Collier report and the national strategy document for growth and poverty reduction provide guidance for formulating and implementing projects with short-term results.

Financial constraints on donor countries are currently significant as they themselves struggle with diminishing revenues. But let us not forget that Haiti's needs are pressing and very significant. In a time of crisis, the poorest within and among nations are the ones most adversely affected. We must not withdraw our helping hand precisely when they need it most. Active leadership will be required on our part to ensure continued commitment to Haiti and its efforts to address the basic needs of its population.

For Brazil's part, President Lula and Minister for Foreign Affairs Celso Amorim have, time and again, reaffirmed our commitment to assist Haiti on its path to stability and development. This approach sustains our firm engagement with MINUSTAH. Our troops will remain in Haiti as long as Haitian authorities and the international community deem it necessary.

We were pleased to hear this morning the acknowledgement by Security Council members of the contribution made by the Force Commander, General Santos Cruz, and by the troops and policemen in MINUSTAH. The new Force Commander, General Floriano Peixoto Vieira Neto, will assume his functions shortly. We are confident that he will provide the same quality of leadership as his predecessors.

Our commitment to Haiti also translates into bilateral and trilateral cooperation projects in a wide gamut of areas, such as agriculture, fisheries, education and energy generation.

The coming elections for the senate are crucial, not only to consolidate Haiti's institutions, but also to facilitate the legislative work in the upper house of parliament and therefore help to advance the needed reforms. Brazil contributed $500,000 for the organization of the electoral process, which we are confident will be transparent, fair and credible.

The Brazilian Government is closely following the current efforts by the Haitian Government to prepare institutional reforms. We trust that an inclusive process of consultations will allow Haitian society as a whole to reach the necessary agreements. Effective and sustainable democratic governance is a goal to be pursued with great determination and even a sense of urgency everywhere, Haiti being no exception.

The upcoming senatorial elections and the donor conference constitute two major opportunities for Haiti to reaffirm ownership of its political and socio-economic development processes. We call upon the Security Council to send an unequivocal message of its continuous support for Haiti and for the work being done by MINUSTAH.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Argentina.

Mr. Argüello (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like at the outset to indicate that my delegation associates itself with the statement of the Permanent Representative of Uruguay, who spoke on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti. I also wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April and, in particular, to thank the delegation of Mexico for convening this open debate on the situation in Haiti. In addition, I wish to highlight the importance of the visits by the Security Council mission and by the Secretary-General to Haiti as a demonstration of the international community's commitment with respect to the situation in the country.

When, in 2004, the Security Council established the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the country was sinking into violence to which the State had no institutional capacity to respond. For this reason, the Council established an integrated mission with a strong mandate, focused on the issue of security. The main objective of MINUSTAH was to establish a secure, stable environment, where the political and constitutional process in the country could develop. In this sense, we can say that in the current phase of its development, the Mission has certainly made significant progress.

Thus, the coming to power of a constitutionally elected Haitian Government was a first major step in the political life of the country. Similarly, the resolution of the political crisis triggered by the fall of the Prime Minister in April 2008, through the appointment of a new Prime Minister in September of the same year, and the call for parliamentary elections, which will take place in this month of April 2009, are milestones in the development of the Haitian political process that we should see in a positive light.

That is the meaning of what the Secretary-General is saying in his latest report on Haiti (S/2009/129) when he stresses the progress on the political dialogue, reflected in the will of Haitian political leaders to work together to respond to the country's situation, and in particular to the crisis created by the devastating hurricanes and tropical storms of 2008.

As a country participating in MINUSTAH, the first peace mission with a majority of Latin American contingents, in terms of both troops and the military command, Argentina is pleased that the Mission has become a decisive factor in re-establishing stability and security in the country and in supporting the Haitian people in its commitment to democracy. The recent Security Council mission to Haiti noted the progress made in the security sphere and stressed the support that MINUSTAH gives the Haitian National Police to build its capacity. It also indicated that the improvements achieved can be seen in the decrease in the crime rate and in the increasing confidence of the Haitian people in the police.

The progress made in the area of security is encouraging. However, we note with concern that Haiti's opportunities for economic and social development have been significantly compromised, especially because of the grave damage inflicted by natural disasters. The situation in Haiti continues to be fragile owing to persistent poverty and unemployment and the limited capacity of Haitian institutions to provide basic services to the population. The close relationship between security and development highlights the fact that the action of the international community cannot and must not be confined to the presence of MINUSTAH, as any lack of visible improvement in the living conditions of the Haitian people could endanger the country's stability.

For this reason, the upcoming donor conference in Washington is an opportunity to move forward on Haiti's economic and social development and in its institution-building, confronting the many challenges that face us. To this end, the coordination of international cooperation with Haiti must be improved and institutional capacity in Haiti must be strengthened, thus ensuring the dawning of a new age. We must work for Haiti to take charge, in the medium-term, of the implementation and coordination of the assistance it receives.

The United Nations has an essential role to play, since without a real bolstering of the Haitian State, a political consultation process that ensures governance and a basic level of human development, the factors that made it necessary for the Organization to intervene will never be resolved. The success of the United Nations will be demonstrated when its presence is no longer necessary.

We are facing a unique historic opportunity to align the contributions of the international community with the priorities established by the Government of Haiti for its own economic and social development. In this context, I wish to stress the commitment of the Latin American countries to Haiti, especially through technical cooperation projects entailing a substantial human resources presence and aimed at strengthening the Haitian State. The cooperation that Argentina provides to Haiti in the fields of food security and strengthening the structures of the Ministry of Planning and Cooperation and the Ministry of Economy and Finance are carried out in this context.

Before concluding, I would like to return to the main conclusions of the most recent report of the Secretary-General on Haiti, where he notes that, notwithstanding difficulties, we have an opportunity to advance towards the consolidation of stability in Haiti.

To this end, the continued commitment of international community to support Haiti's security, State institutions and economic and social development must be ensured.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Del Rosario Ceballos (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to congratulate Mexico, a distinguished member of our region, on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April and for its initiative to convene an open Security Council debate on Haiti. Debates such as this keep the spotlight on the principle of solidarity and the commitment of the international community to Haiti.

Likewise, I wish to congratulate the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for the transparency and good work they carried out during the month of March at the head of the Security Council. I also thank Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for his valuable briefing this morning.

Recently, nature has had a harsh impact on what were already difficult living conditions for the peoples of our two countries, but we recognize that it has been even more devastating for the neighbouring people of Haiti. Recurring hurricanes have cast a shadow and indeed affected Haiti's present and its future, at least its immediate future. In this context, we note the urgency of responding to the call for solidarity expressed in many multilateral forums by prominent leaders in our region. The time has come to actively help Haiti, and as the Secretary-General has said, this help should be aimed at reducing Haiti's dependence on humanitarian assistance, as recent statistical studies have observed that Haiti's economic fundamentals are strong.

The Dominican Republic views in a very positive light the work done by MINUSTAH, and believes that this effort of solidarity, which involves the countries of our region and other parts of the world, will contribute to the development and institutional, economic and social progress of the Haitian people.

The Dominican Republic is currently working with Haiti, as noted by the Secretary-General in his report on MINUSTAH (S/2009/129), on the re-establishment of the Haitian-Dominican Joint Commission, which is aimed at addressing priority issues in our relations, including immigration issues, the increasing trade, health, education, border security, the fight against drug trafficking, the environment and other questions of interest for both countries.

In this regard, I am pleased to announce that the Joint Commission will be meeting starting in mid-April 2009 to commence work on our important common agenda. Without a doubt, the friendly and special nature of the personal relations between President Fernández Reyna of the Dominican Republic and President Préval of Haiti has contributed significantly to the progress in strengthening the ties between the Dominican Republic and Haiti and, above all, to the readiness to facilitate communication and better understanding, as befits two peoples destined to share a geographical border.

With regard to border management, the Dominican Republic has implemented a professionally managed programme on its side of the border through the creation of CESFRONT, or the Specialized Border Security Force. It is charged with supervising the border with a view to preventing the trafficking of drugs, arms and persons and has the specific mandate of ensuring strict respect for the physical integrity and health of the persons that cross through it. The results of that programme were highlighted in the report of the Security Council mission that recently visited Haiti, which confirmed the climate of respect and professionalism that prevails in the border area.

We support the upcoming donor conference that will be held in Washington, and we trust that it will stimulate the cooperation of the international community with Haiti. Recent progress in Haiti has been noted by the Security Council mission and by the Secretary-General following his visit to Haiti with former President Clinton.

We know that the international financial and economic crisis affects us all, but in our opinion, the principle of solidarity should be maintained, particularly in the case of Haiti, since, as the Secretary-General has said, the progress that has been made there remains very fragile and is subject to reversal.

I conclude by reiterating the readiness of the Government of the Dominican Republic to continue to contribute to this effort in favour of Haiti. I trust that the international community, and in particular donor

countries as a whole, will continue to adhere to the sound principle of solidarity.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ecuador.

Ms. Espinosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to express my gratitude to your country for its initiative to convene this special meeting on the report (S/2009/129) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). This is an issue of great importance not only to Ecuador but to all of Latin America and the Caribbean. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica for its effectiveness and dynamism during its leadership of the Security Council group to assess this organ's resolutions on MINUSTAH.

Showing solidarity with Haiti has been a permanent feature of Ecuador's foreign policy. That has been especially true at times when that sisterly Caribbean country has suffered the devastating effects of hurricanes and tropical depressions, which have increased the vulnerability and affected millions of our Haitian brothers. My delegation takes this opportunity to express its support for MINUSTAH and for Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of MINUSTAH, for their efforts to improve stability and the political situation in Haiti.

The latest report of the Secretary-General, issued on 6 March 2008, highlights the progress made in implementing the mandate of the Mission established by the Security Council and in fulfilling all the relevant resolutions. My country has joined the international community and the United Nations in committing itself to actively cooperate in peacekeeping and the maintenance of peace and security through an ongoing rotation of military engineers, resources and equipment to MINUSTAH. Ecuador's military contingent in Haiti is thereby providing support to the Government of Haiti with a view to establishing a security environment that will make it possible to sustainably re-establish democratic institutions, fully restore the rule of law and put in place the framework necessary to promoting the economic well-being and development of that sisterly Caribbean country.

With regard to peacekeeping operations, Ecuador's policy is not limited to sending troops. A whole host of measures have been adopted that reflect a comprehensive policy on security. For instance, five years ago, Ecuador established a school unit on peace missions. The education given to Ecuadorian Blue Helmets helps them to address problems associated with displaced persons, refugees and humanitarian disasters. It also trains them to resolve problems that may arise with civilian populations.

Ecuador is also proud to be part of the Consultative Group 2 x 9 on Haiti, which supports achieving the benchmarks that the Secretary-General conveyed to the Security Council in his August 2008 report (S/2008/586) to strengthen stability in Haiti: promoting political dialogue and elections, extending State authority, establishing a sustainable security mechanism, the rule of law and human rights. We hope that the social and economic development benchmark will be met in the near future. Ecuador believes that social inclusion and ending poverty are among the major challenges facing the sisterly Haitian country.

Ecuador also welcomes the extension of MINUSTAH's mandate. We also commend the Senate's confirmation, in December 2008, of Mrs. Michelle Duvivier Pierre-Louis as Prime Minister at a time of emergency in order to address the various crises from which Haiti is suffering. Ecuador very much hopes that the upcoming elections for the Haitian Senate will take place in a free, fair and inclusive manner and in an atmosphere of openness and peaceful debate that allows for decisive progress on the institutional reforms that are needed.

Haiti continues to suffer from food insecurity, high levels of poverty and unemployment, and a fragile humanitarian situation. My Government hopes that the Group of Friends of Haiti, donor countries and Haitian Government officials will succeed in agreeing on a long-term stabilization programme that will facilitate and accelerate the reconstruction and development process of that sisterly country. Ecuador also hopes that the donor conference to be held on 14 April in Washington, D.C., will be an opportunity for countries friendly to Haiti put in place the necessary mechanisms to lay the foundations for achieving the stable and lasting economic and social development that the Haitian people so long for and deserve. My country reiterates its unwavering commitment to contribute to building a better future for Haiti, our sisterly Caribbean country.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Chávez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is pleased to see you, Mr. President, guiding the work of the Security Council this month. We are also pleased to participate in this open debate, for which we are grateful. We would also like to associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Uruguay on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti.

My delegation would also like to express its gratitude for the Security Council's mission to Haiti from 11 to 14 March. We would like in particular, through you, to congratulate Ambassador Jorge Urbina, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica, for his serious and professional leadership on a subject of particular importance and sensitivity for Latin America and the Caribbean. We would also like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for his ongoing efforts in Haiti and for the important information he has given us.

It is clear that the security situation in Haiti has improved. Areas that were once convulsed by violence, such as Cité Soleil, today enjoy considerable calm with regard to daily life. Co-existence and political dialogue continue to prevail, despite some difficulties. We hope for the success of the elections to be held this month to elect a third of the Senate. We also welcome improvements in extending State authority, strengthening the rule of law and respect for human rights.

However, it is no less true that there are specific and quite worrisome problems on the socio-economic front. We are concerned about the deterioration in people's living standards as a result of the difficulties that the country faced in 2008, in particular as a result of the global food crisis and the damage caused by the hurricanes that struck the island. In an already extremely fragile environment, those difficulties have been exacerbated by the effects of the global financial and economic crisis. Far from losing hope, we should face the challenges with renewed vigour. Haiti's reconstruction and development are still unfinished tasks.

Haiti now has a priceless opportunity in the high-level donor conference that will take place on 14 April in Washington, D.C.. This is essentially an opportunity to secure financial and technological support, as well as to further focus the Government's effort with regard to planning and the necessary identification of key objectives in the areas of food security, steps to create jobs and providing reliable basic services. Addressing urgent needs, which no doubt exist, does not obviate the need to think about the long term and about sustainable economic and social development. The goal should be not just to secure resources, but also to improve governance.

Speaking more broadly, it is a priority to support the progress to which reference has been made in the areas of security, political dialogue, the extension of State authority and entrenching the rule of law and respect for human rights. That should be done through steps that make it possible to gradually and concretely raise the standards of living of the average Haitian.

My delegation would like to highlight once again the important role that is being played by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti in bringing stability in Haiti. We would also once again like to commend the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti and of United Nations development agencies that, along with other international bodies, are doing commendable work in that country. Coordination between the Government of Haiti and all the groups providing advice, cooperation or assistance should continue to be fine-tuned and strengthened. Ensuring ownership of the process by the Government and the people of Haiti is a major challenge which must be faced with decision, energy and healthy optimism. It is also a major responsibility: ultimately, the Government and the people of Haiti must set the guidelines and decide on their own future, with the active support of the international community.

Once again, I stress the unwavering commitment of the Government of Peru to the stabilization and development of Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Czech Republic.

Mr. Palouš (Czech Republic): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

First and foremost, let me begin by thanking Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, for his comprehensive briefing and for his leadership of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). I would also like to welcome the President of the Economic and Social Council and to thank all those who briefed the Council and all those who participated in today's debate.

The European Union welcomes the recent mission of the Security Council to Haiti and expresses its gratitude to the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica, who led the mission. The European Union followed with great interest the main achievements and outcomes of the mission. We also took note of the recent recommendations of the Secretary-General presented in his latest semi-annual report on MINUSTAH (S/2009/129).

The European Union would like to thank MINUSTAH for its very active and effective work, shown predominantly through its efforts in reversing the deteriorating security situation and assisting with State building and institutional capacity-building. The European Union also notes the progress in the professionalization of the Haitian National Police (HNP), which operates in close cooperation with MINUSTAH. It underlines the continued need for increased cooperation with the Haitian national police with a view to responding more effectively to threats from organized crime. Justice reform is also one of the prerequisites for consolidating the security situation.

We share the opinion that the formation of a Government with Michelle Duvivier Pierre-Louis as its Prime Minister was an important achievement, and we encourage the Government to take additional steps forward in the country's further political, security and socio-economic stabilization. The European Union also commends the leadership of President René Garcia Préval in stabilizing the economy and restoring political institutions.

The partial senatorial elections to be held in April and June 2009, which have been postponed since the end of 2007, remain a significant challenge for Haiti on the political front. Those elections will complete the composition of the upper chamber of the National Assembly of Haiti. The successful conducting of those elections will without doubt contribute to further stabilization of Haiti's political and security situation. Therefore, support provided by the international community is crucial in this area. The European Commission will contribute the amount of €3.3 million to these efforts.

While tangible progress has been reached in the areas of political dialogue and elections, the extension of State authority, security, rule of law and human rights, there is still much that needs to be done in these areas. The European Union commends the efforts of MINUSTAH in assisting the Haitian authorities, in particular the Haitian National Police, in the areas of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform. The European Union believes that State-building activities and security sector reform need to be further pursued, as security sector reform is one of the key challenges that the Haitian Government faces. The European Union is committed to remaining part of the international community's efforts in supporting Haiti in this critical area, which also encompasses the rule of law, human rights and combating armed violence and organized crime.

The European Union remains particularly concerned about the levels of poverty and the socio-economic and humanitarian situation in Haiti. In this regard, the global financial crisis, the food crisis and the devastating consequences of Hurricanes Fay and Gustav and the tropical storms, have put additional pressure on Haiti's already dire socio-economic conditions. This deterioration of the socio-economic situation must be reversed to avoid a potential negative impact on the overall security situation, which still remains very fragile. In this context, the continuing engagement and vigilance of MINUSTAH is important.

The focus of European Union cooperation is shifting from support for the transition period through democratic reform and rehabilitation to economic recovery and basic services. The European Union indeed believes that strong socio-economic development is required to sustain and consolidate the new-found stability. Furthermore, the capacity of the State to deliver basic services needs to be enhanced. The European Union cooperation strategy with Haiti for 2008 to 2013 is based on those elements. The strategy, funded with €291 million, will primarily focus on infrastructure, mainly the building of roads, as well as on governance. In this context, I would also like to mention that in February 2009 the European Union, which is one of the major donors to Haiti, opened a

local representation of its Humanitarian Aid Office in Port-au-Prince.

In conclusion, the European Union would like to express its full support for the high-level international conference on Haiti that is scheduled for 13 and 14 April in Washington, D.C., to support reconstruction efforts and the implementation of the Government growth and poverty reduction strategy. The conference will also contribute to the establishment of a new paradigm for cooperation between Haiti and its financial donors. The European Union stands ready to play an active part there.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Moreno Fernández (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): First and foremost, Sir, I would like to express, on behalf of Cuba, our satisfaction at seeing you, a representative of Mexico, our sister nation, presiding over the Security Council. We wish you great success in your work.

The revolution leading to the independence of Haiti on 1 January 1804 was the first event by which the Caribbean became known as an actor on the world stage. The Haitian revolution, which sheltered and encouraged many revolutionaries of the continent at crucial moments of the Latin American fight against colonial domination, also influenced in a special and powerful manner the destiny and formation of the Cuban nation.

However, Haiti, cradle of the liberation wars against colonialism in America and the first independent republic in Latin America and the Caribbean, is today a country neglected by the international community. That Caribbean country is one of the clearest examples of the evil consequences of colonialism and neocolonialism, of the unjust and exclusionary current international order and of the continuous interventionism that has characterized its turbulent history.

When addressing the situation of Haiti in the framework of the United Nations, attention almost always centers on so-called security matters, which for all practical purposes minimizes the urgent attention to the serious structural, economic and social problems of the country. To achieve peace, security and stability in that nation requires, first of all, the elimination of poverty and underdevelopment. Clearly, there can be no development without peace and stability, but it is even clearer that there can be no peace and stability without development and that there can be no peace and security for a people living in hunger, terrible poverty, ill health and illiteracy.

We recognize that the security situation on the ground has improved since the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti was established in 2005. There has not been, however, nor there can be a military solution to the question of Haiti. Almost 80 per cent of the population of that country lives in poverty, half of the labour force is unemployed, life expectancy is below 52 years, and 48 out of every 100 inhabitants are illiterate. The number of people infected with HIV is the highest of all Caribbean States and almost half of the population is malnourished.

Last year, Haiti suffered a new, devastating blow from four consecutive hurricanes and tropical storms that lashed the country. The death toll was huge and the damage to the infrastructure and the economy amounted to approximately 15 per cent of the gross domestic product, the worst Haiti has faced since early the early twentieth century.

Cuba, a small blockaded country with limited resources, has continued and increased its cooperation with that Caribbean sister nation, mainly in the health sector, but also in others, such as energy, education, agriculture and sports. At present, over 400 Cuban cooperants, mainly from the health sector, are rendering their services in the most remote places of Haiti. Almost 200 specialists in comprehensive general medicine and other specialties are at work in every department of the country. Since the Cuban collaboration with Haiti was initiated in 1998, Cuban doctors have given over 14 million consultations, assisted over 100,000 childbirths and performed 250,000 surgical procedures.

Almost 300 young Haitian doctors who graduated in our country are being trained with the Cuban medical brigade in Haiti. About 50 Haitian doctors are studying their second specialty in Cuba. Moreover, over 600 Haitian scholarship holders are studying in Cuba today totally free of charge. Five hundred of these students are connected to health specialties. Over 800 Haitian youths have graduated as professionals from Cuban schools. In the framework of Operation Miracle, a cooperation programme developed by Cuba and Venezuela to offer free assistance to patients from

various countries with eye problems, 32,191 Haitian patients had undergone surgery as of February 2009, 31,035 of whom were treated in two eye centres and two mobile surgical units donated by the Republic of Cuba to that Caribbean country. The implementation of the Cuban literacy programme "Yo si Puedo" has taught 160,490 Haitians to read and write.

Cuba's actions on behalf of Haiti are a modest example of how much can be achieved in that country through international cooperation and assistance, mainly from those States with larger economic and financial resources. Haiti has very limited resources to face its many challenges. It is the unshirkable duty of the international community to contribute massively, increase its assistance and honour its financial and human commitments to that Caribbean country. Without the support of the international community, even the modest Millennium Development Goals will remain unattainable for Haiti.

I would like to conclude by reiterating that Haiti can always count on the assistance and solidarity of the Cuban people and Government. We are simply fulfilling a duty and honouring our debt of gratitude to the Caribbean peoples, which have always showed their firm and constant friendship and solidarity with Cuba.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Colombia.

Ms. Blum (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, and through you Mexico, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month. We wish you success in the consideration of the issues on the busy agenda of the Council that you made public at a press conference on 2 April.

We welcome your initiative to convene this open debate and to give special attention to the question of Haiti. The participation in this debate of representatives of the Economic and Social Council, the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank, among other important institutions, emphasizes the comprehensive and pragmatic focus with which the consideration of this important matter has been approached.

Colombia recognizes the problems and challenges that Haiti faces, recently exacerbated by natural disasters and an international economic and financial crisis, as well as by soaring food prices. We share with other Latin American and Caribbean countries the priority and resolve to support Haiti in overcoming the challenges facing it. To that end, in addition to the bilateral efforts it has already undertaken, Colombia is participating in several regional initiatives.

Following the guidelines of the President of Colombia, we are focusing our participation principally on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Responding to an explicit call by the United Nations, Colombia recently increased its contribution to the Mission by contributing police officers with experience in fighting kidnapping and the world drug problem.

Colombia will broaden its contribution of police personnel to MINUSTAH and will continue to work with the other Latin American countries. Recently, we initiated our participation as an observer country in the 2 x 9 Mechanism, established by the Deputy Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. We also participate in the Working Group for the Latin American coordination and cooperation with the Haitian National Police.

Allow me to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Mr. Hédi Annabi, for the report (S/2009/129) that he presented today for the consideration of the Council, in which important considerations, which Colombia shares, are formulated. We agree with the report to the effect that one of the greatest short-term challenges facing Haiti is the upcoming senatorial elections, and with the recommendation that every effort must be made to guarantee that this democratic exercise be free, fair and inclusive. It is likewise important for the Haitian political leadership to adopt a collaborative approach that allows the legislative agenda to move forward and towards longer-term objectives.

Regarding the strengthening of institutions, we agree with the Secretary-General's observation in his report that the impact of bilateral initiatives would be enhanced through improved coordination within an overarching, nationally owned framework for State reform. The donor conference that will shortly be held in Washington, D.C., will be a good opportunity to make progress in that respect.

Colombia, aware of the essential role that security plays in the consolidation of State authority

and institution-strengthening, welcomes the timely decision adopted by the Security Council in October 2007 on the enlargement of police personnel in MINUSTAH.

In March 2009, the Colombian Deputy Minister of Defence and the Director of the Colombian National Police undertook a visit to Haiti, where they had the opportunity to conduct interviews with the highest authorities of the country, members of the United Nations team and diplomats of Latin American countries, with the objective of identifying Haiti's primary needs and possibilities for cooperation.

As a result of the visit, greater efforts will be made towards greater cooperation in the area of security, providing Haiti and MINUSTAH with Colombia's experience in strategic planning, police organization and the training of commissioned and non-commissioned officers and specialized teams, such as judicial police. As mentioned before, cooperation with the Haitian police will be broadened in the battle against drugs, kidnapping and common and organized crime.

The strengthening of the Haitian National Police is a step in the right direction and a response to the present challenges, particularly the fight against crime, the extent of which calls for a comprehensive police response. As part of Colombia's contributions to that process, we have consistently supported the establishment of institutions with the capacity to respond to those challenges within the framework of the protection of human rights.

In the field of natural disasters, which have affected Haiti's efforts towards economic and social development, in 2008 Colombia made a contribution of six tons of food, medicines and other elements of emergency humanitarian assistance to address the emergency situation and mitigate the effects of hurricane Gustav and tropical storm Hanna. Our cooperation also includes technical education, food security and environment protection initiatives. Colombia hopes that the solidarity and material support offered by the international community will effectively contribute to the consolidation of democracy, security and sustainable development in Haiti. We believe that all of the efforts channelled through MINUSTAH will translate into better living conditions for the Haitian population.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Government of Hugo Chávez Frías, Sir, I wish you resounding success as you lead the work of the Security Council during the month of April.

Haiti has played a stellar role in the history of Venezuela. Francisco de Miranda, a forefather in our fight for independence, created the first flag of Venezuela in Haiti. Simón Bolívar, the liberator not only of Venezuela but of other nations of the Americas, was protected and supported by the illustrious leader Alexandre Pétion, father of independent Haiti — the first nation of Latin America and the Caribbean to gain its independence from colonialism. Haiti has suffered various invasions and interventions throughout its history and has been subject to the most despicable imperial efforts to undermine its sovereignty.

According to a report of the United Nations Development Programme, Haiti was ranked 146th out of 177 countries in 2008. Life expectancy at birth was 59.5 years in 2005. That calamitous reality makes it necessary for Haiti to obtain, on an urgent basis, the social assistance and investment that will raise its living conditions. Without such social and economic cooperation and without setting limits on the perverse logic of capital that seeks to turn a profit at any cost, it will be impossible for Haiti to obtain full and self-sufficient development for all its people.

From 1990 onwards, like other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, Haiti suffered under the perverse prescriptions of neo-liberal economists, imposed under the auspices of the World Bank. Those prescriptions were totally unsuited to our realities. The social and human consequences were devastating and led to the dismantling of an already severely affected economic base as well as agricultural and livestock production. That situation created an opportunity for imported products and voracious international consortiums. The perversity of such capital was lethal to the socio-economic structure of Haiti and had terrible consequences that completely undermined its food sovereignty. The current international economic and financial crisis affects not only Haiti, but all poor countries, increasing poverty and inequality. Haiti is a warning against the predatory economic models and

the high social costs a country may have to pay for them.

Since the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) entered Haiti, some stabilization objectives for Haiti have been met, but it must also be recognized that major mistakes have been made, calling into question cooperation with the military and police sectors and to prioritizing the strengthening of security. My country's experience demonstrates that this can even be counter-productive if no plan has been set out for comprehensive economic and social cooperation. The Bolivarian Government believes that this is what the people and the Government of Haiti require.

Mr. René Préval, President of Haiti, has stressed the fact that MINUSTAH must reinvent itself to open the door to a new era. He has mentioned the need to reform Haiti's judicial system and above all to obtain socio-economic support. We believe that President Préval is responding to the social, political and economic crisis.

The Bolivarian Government of Venezuela, led by Hugo Chávez Frías, has provided sustained assistance to the Haitian people in the form of energy cooperation to help hospitals and clinics to provide treatment. Together with our sister Government of Cuba, we have provided food and health care assistance. We are moved by our desire to overcome poverty through the use of integration plans based on solidarity between peoples and Governments. Venezuela has also stepped up every time devastating natural disasters have struck the country of Alexandre Piéton.

The people of Haiti are worthy and valiant. They do not wish to be treated as less able. They have fought valiantly for their freedom, self-determination and independence. They do not want handouts from the international community, but cooperation and solidarity, the only possible cooperation in the framework of which the people of Haiti can exercise their own destiny in sovereignty.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Jamaica.

Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica): May I at the outset, on behalf of my Caribbean Community colleagues and my own delegation, extend warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency for this month.

When I assure the Council of the honour, the pride and satisfaction which my delegation feels in addressing the Security Council in the name of the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community on the question of Haiti, and express my gratitude for the invitation extended to do so, I do much more than pay homage to a convention of this august body. I feel that I am discharging a family obligation, since Haiti is a member of the Caribbean family. We sit in the same regional councils, working together toward the same regional goals and objectives, and therefore we naturally share a common view of the importance of this consideration by the Council of the situation concerning Haiti and a common expectation regarding its outcome.

The Secretary-General deserves commendation for the wide-ranging, frank and substantive assessments contained in the report he has presented, in document S/2009/129, on the progress of the effort to implement resolution 1840 (2008) during the period from 27 August 2008 to 27 February 2009. In that report we see clearly the enormous complexity of the situation in Haiti and the many challenges facing the effort to consolidate that country's stability and lay a foundation for security and sustainable long-term development. Those processes were further complicated by the series of tropical storms and hurricanes that ravaged the country during the reporting period, and later by the effects of the global financial and economic crisis.

While there is certainly no room to minimize or downplay the seriousness of the factors that still hobble the stabilization effort in Haiti, in like manner we should be careful to discern, and give their due worth to, the creativity, perseverance and sheer grit through which we see hopeful changes emerging on the Haitian panorama. I refer to the area of establishing political dialogue and to the extension and strengthening of the authority and reach of the State and of the rule of law, for example.

For sure, these are achievements of the Haitian authorities and people, who deserve our recognition. But a great share of the credit also goes to the men and women of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for their dedicated, patient and constructive involvement in providing assistance and support to the people of Haiti over a wide range of areas critical to the re-establishment of conditions of stability, such as the provision of security assistance to

the electoral process, enhancing institutional capacity, promoting and strengthening security, reducing violence, enhancing police capacity and the enjoyment of human rights, among others. The Caribbean Community expresses its sincere appreciation to MINUSTAH for these valuable contributions. May I add that the Caribbean States are proud of the level of assistance we have been able to provide with the dispatch of police units and police officers from two member States, Grenada and Jamaica.

But however encouraging these improvements may be, the Secretary-General is careful to note their fragile nature. While the task of making them more robust is the responsibility of the Haitian authorities and people, the international community has a duty to support them in this effort. In this regard, the Caribbean Community supports the convening of the high-level donor conference to lend support to the implementation of the National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction. We look forward to strengthened unity and cooperation among the Haitian people and to the creation of conditions of greater security and stability in the country. In our view, these would offer the best promise of a meaningful and productive partnership between the Haitian authorities and the donor community in order to ensure that the country is helped onto a path of sustained economic recovery.

Finally, the Caribbean Community wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his report and for his recent visit to Haiti. We strongly endorse his appeal for the international community to continue to focus attention on the provision of much needed assistance to Haiti, an appeal that, we note, was strongly endorsed by his Special Representative today. We also wish to express sincere appreciation to that Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Hédi Annabi, for his leadership of MINUSTAH and for the comprehensive report that he provided to the Council.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Ambassador Léo Mérorès, Permanent Representative of Haiti.

Mr. Mérorès (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first, Mr. President, to congratulate you on Mexico's assuming the presidency of the Security Council. As you know, Mexico is a country friendly with ours. Also, I would like to congratulate you on the exemplary manner in which you have been conducting the work of the Council during your presidency. I wish to thank you too for having taken the initiative to hold this open debate on the question of Haiti.

I also congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Annabi, for the briefing he gave us this morning, which admirably complements the Secretary-General's recent report on the situation in Haiti. On behalf of the Government of Haiti, I wish to congratulate him on the outstanding job done under his enlightened leadership by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

I would like to take this opportunity to express once again, on behalf of the Government and people of Haiti, our gratitude to the many countries of the region, of CARICOM, which, under Brazil, are participating in MINUSTAH. The positive results of the Mission were covered at length by many speakers and do not need any additional comments.

In that regard, before I go on, I wish to make particular mention of all those workers for peace who, day and night, are present throughout Haiti and who are giving the authorities and people of Haiti their contributions to the renewal of the country. They come from all continents and from various horizons, but they are all inspired and united by their desire to help redress a situation that has gone on all too long. The Government of Haiti salutes their efforts. I wish to take this opportunity to humbly pay my respects to those who have perished on the field of honour.

Once again I should like to thank the members of the Security Council and the international community as a whole for the ongoing interest in Haiti. I carefully noted the various comments, analyses and suggestions that provided a backdrop to the various statements. Very sincerely, I would like to thank all speakers, from CARICOM and the Latin American region or elsewhere, for the support they have shown with regard to my country. I convey to them the gratitude of the Government and people of Haiti.

I need not recall the importance and symbolism of the recent visit to Haiti by a high-level delegation led by the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, and the former United States President, Bill Clinton, a visit referred to by several speakers. It was followed by the Security Council's visit, from 11 to 14 March, under the leadership of Ambassador Urbina of Costa Rica, which was very much appreciated by the Haitian people and Government. They see it as tangible proof of the international community's interest in the situation in Haiti and its commitment to support us in rebuilding the country. The Government and people of

Haiti remain fully committed, with the strong support of regional and international institutions and the entire international community, to building a new, modern, democratic society, one geared towards sustainable development.

The Secretary-General's report in document S/2009/129, before us today, is very timely and commands our attention. It has come at a crucial time, when the Haitian people are preparing to cast their votes on the 19th of this month in order to fill 12 vacancies in the Senate of the Republic. These elections, as the report says, could help facilitate the functioning of the upper house and reinforce the bases of democratic renewal to which the Haitian nation aspires.

While, as the report stresses, the security situation has definitely improved thanks to better coordination between the Haitian National Police and MINUSTAH, we cannot declare victory, because the situation clearly remains fragile. The report itself acknowledges that. I would like to say that the Government is perfectly aware, just as we all are, that much remains to be done in that area. That is why we attach special importance to initiatives to give the country a 14,000-strong police force by 2011, while increasing and improving our efforts with regard to the judicial and correctional systems, to which some speakers referred today.

Regarding socio-economic development, as many speakers have acknowledged, Haiti is still struggling to recover from the adverse effects of last April's food crisis and of the storms that struck the country in August and September 2008, caused considerable destruction to major infrastructure and almost wiped out our agriculture sector. As a result, the national economy is still suffering enormously, which is compounded by the global economic and financial crisis affecting the whole world. We know only too well that 78 per cent of the population still lives below the poverty line and that the efforts of the Haitian authorities and the international community to meet the Millennium Development Goals are being sorely tested.

That is why my delegation would like, through this body, to once again thank the Secretary-General for his active commitment to the success of the donor conference on Haiti's social and economic development that will take place in Washington on 14 April, that is to say next week. In that connection, it is worth underscoring the trip that the economist Paul Collier recently made to Haiti at the Secretary-General's request and the resulting report. The needs and the possibilities were in most cases identified and are taken up in our national strategy paper for growth and poverty reduction.

Aligning the interventions of our partners with the priorities of the Government and the funds to be released following that conference will, we hope, give the country a boost and enable it to move forward on a different, far more stable economic basis. Once again, our thanks go to delegations that have shown their interest in the success of the conference and have already expressed their intention to actively participate. The Haitian Government has no doubt that, with their support, the goals that it has set for the economic recovery of the country and for meeting the basic needs of the population will be achieved. More than one speaker has made the point today that Haiti is at a decisive turning point and that the country and the international community should seize the moment. We would like to affirm that, for its part, Haiti stands ready to do so.

It has very often been said that economic development and security are closely linked and that no country can escape that linkage. Moreover, in addition to the efforts that the Security Council is making through MINUSTAH to stabilize the country, as various speakers have recalled, it is also clear that that stabilization is contingent on progress in the area of socio-economic development. That is why my Government, aware of that crucial link, attaches great importance to the success of the Washington conference next week and affirms that it looks forward to the strong support the international community at this conference.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now invite Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, to make some final comments.

Mr. Annabi: I would like to thank the members of the Security Council for their strong expressions of support for the performance of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and for the stabilization process in Haiti in general. I will share the comments made by the members of the Council today with the members of our team, who will, I am sure, find them very encouraging. We hope that this support can be sustained, including in particular in the context of the upcoming Washington conference.

I would also like, especially at a time when Mexico is presiding over the Security Council, to place on record my strong appreciation for the critical contribution that the Latin American countries are making, with others, to the work of MINUSTAH. In that connection, I would like to acknowledge in particular the contribution that our outgoing Force Commander, General Santos Cruz, has made to the improvement of the security situation in Haiti and to acknowledge his highly effective leadership during the 27 months that he has spent with us in MINUSTAH.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Organization of American States for its cooperation and its support to the electoral process through the registration of voters, as well as for the support that they are providing to the Haitian authorities in the printing and distribution of identity cards to eligible voters.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to thank you for organizing this important debate and for your helpful observations, and those of members of the Council. We will certainly bear them in mind, including the comments of Ambassador Urbina on sustainability, which are clearly very relevant. I believe that we need to continue to work together to create an environment in Haiti that is sustainable not only from the point of security, but also in order to place the country on a durable development track so that when the time comes MINUSTAH can leave without having to return.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council welcomes the progress achieved so far in critical areas for the consolidation of Haiti's stability, namely political dialogue, extension of State authority, including border management, strengthening of security, and rule of law and human rights.
>
> "The Council notes with concern the challenges in the area of social and economic development, as there has been a marked deterioration in the living standards of the vast majority of Haitians. The Council reiterates the need for security to be accompanied by social and economic development as a way for Haiti to achieve lasting stability. In this regard, the Council calls upon MINUSTAH and the United Nations Country Team to enhance further their coordination with the Government of Haiti and international and regional partners, while bearing in mind the ownership and primary responsibility of the Government and people of Haiti.
>
> "The Council recognizes the vital importance of the high-level donor conference on Haiti to be hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C., on 14 April. The Council welcomes the valuable continuing support of donors and urges them to make available the additional technical and financial assistance required by the Government of Haiti to meet the country's immediate humanitarian, early recovery and reconstruction needs, while laying the foundations for sustainable economic and social development.
>
> "The Council urges the institutions of Haiti to intensify their efforts to meet the Haitian population's basic needs, and to work together to promote dialogue, the rule of law and good governance.
>
> "The Security Council reaffirms the need for the upcoming elections for the renewal of one third of the Senate to be inclusive, free and fair. The Council calls on all political actors in Haiti to ensure the elections are held in a peaceful atmosphere.
>
> "The Security Council reiterates its strong support for MINUSTAH and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for their efforts to improve stability and governance in Haiti, while emphasizing the need for MINUSTAH to continue to adjust to changing circumstances on the ground, and expresses its appreciation to all Member States who support the stabilization process, in particular the troop- and police-contributing countries."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2009/4.

I thank those who participated in today's rich debate for their statements.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.